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ACTION SCT-03

INFO LOG-00 ACDA-17 ACDE-00 AMAD-01 ARA-01 CIAE-00 OASY-00
DODE-00 DS-00 FBIE-00 TEDE-00 INR-00 ADS-00 NSAE-00
SSO-00 SS-00 ASDS-01 DSCC-00 /023W

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1798

RELEASED IN FULL

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 005835

INFO AMEMBASSIES MONTEVIDEO, SANTIAGO, ASUNCION
AND BRASILIA

DEPT FOR S/CT AMBASSADOR WILCOX, DS - ASST
SECRETARY QUAINTON, DS/DSS, DS/I

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PTER, ASEC, AR

SUBJECT: PREMATURE RELEASE OF STATE DEPARTMENT
REPORT ON AMIA BOMBING

1. (C) ENTIRE TEXT

2. BUENOS AIRES CENTER-LEFT DAILY "PAGINA 12"
GAVE PROMINENT COVERAGE AUGUST 31 TO DIPLOMATIC
SECURITY'S REPORT ON THE JULY 18 BOMBING OF
ARGENTINA'S JEWISH MUTUAL ASSOCIATION (AMIA). IN
FACT, THE NEWSPAPER PRINTED THE FIRST PAGES OF THE
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UNCLASSIFIED VERSION OF THE REPORT FOR ALL OF
ARGENTINA TO READ.

3. THE PURVEYOR OF THIS REPORT IS REPORTEDLY MR.
STEVEN EMERSON. HE IS, AS POST UNDERSTANDS, A
FORMER CNN REPORTER WHO IS CURRENTLY WRITING A
BOOK ON TERRORISM. THE LOCAL NEWS MEDIA HAS
PORTRAYED HIM AS A TERRORISM ADVISOR TO PRESIDENT
CLINTON AND ADVISOR ON TERRORISM TO BOTH THE STATE
DEPARTMENT AND THE PENTAGON.

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4. NEITHER THE EMBASSY NOR THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT HAS OFFICIALLY RECEIVED A COPY OF ANY VERSION OF THE REPORT. THIS SERIOUSLY UNDERMINES THIS MISSION'S CREDIBILITY WITH THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT AND MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR US TO RESPOND TO PUBLIC INQUIRIES REGARDING THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S INVESTIGATION OF THE ATTACK. WEEKS AGO, WE ASSURED INVESTIGATING JUDGE JUAN JOSE GALEANO AND THE CHIEF OF THE ARGENTINE FEDERAL POLICE THAT THEY WOULD BE THE FIRST ARGENTINES TO RECEIVE THIS REPORT. WE FIRST READ IN THE PRESS THAT GALEANO HAS IT, BUT FROM MR. EMERSON'S HAND. CLEARLY, WE HAVE NOT KEPT OUR WORD. WE REQUEST A COPY OF THE REPORT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND SOME EXPLANATION OF HOW THIS UNFORTUNATE INCIDENT OCCURRED.

5. COMMENT. OUR ASSISTANCE IN THE INVESTIGATION OF THE AMIA BOMBING WAS OFFERED BY PRESIDENT CLINTON AND SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER IN LETTERS TO
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PRESIDENT MENEM AND PERSONALLY REINFORCED BY UNDER SECRETARY TARNOFF IN HIS MEETING WITH MENEM. THE U.S. INVESTIGATIVE TEAM, INVITED BY THE ARGENTINE AUTHORITIES, WAS GIVEN PRIVILEGED ACCESS TO THE BOMB SITE AND DETAILS OF THE ARGENTINE INVESTIGATION. IT IS ACCUTELY EMBARRASSING TO HAVE THE CONCLUSIONS FROM A U.S. GOVERNMENT EFFORT APPEAR IN A LOCAL NEWSPAPER BEFORE THE EMBASSY HAS BEEN MADE PRIVY TO THEM. OUR FAILURE TO FULFILL OUR COMMITMENTS TO THE ARGENTINE AUTHORITIES IS AT BEST HIGHLY UNPROFESSIONAL.

CHEEK

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